DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 452 768 HE 033 985

TITLE	Mandatory Surveys: Do They Negatively Bias Results? Institutional Research Report Number 4-00-1.
INSTITUTION	East Carolina Univ., Greenville, NC.
PUB DATE	2001-00-00
NOTE	26p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*College Students; *Electronic Mail; Evaluation Methods; Graduation Requirements; Higher Education; Program Evaluation; *Responses; *Statistical Bias; *Student Surveys
IDENTIFIERS	*East Carolina University NC; *Mandatory Programs; Negativism; North Carolina

ABSTRACT

Institutional researchers and others at East Carolina University have been concerned that requiring students to complete a survey, the institutional evaluation form, will have a negative effect on the ratings that students give the university. The responses to electronic forms of this survey completed by seniors and by sophomores are grouped with responses from other universities and colleges in the North Carolina state system, so a high response rate is desirable. To study the effects of the mandatory survey, survey responses were tabulated by the dates they were submitted, on the assumption that students who responded late in the process did so because they felt forced. Students were also given the opportunity to register their comments about the survey. Very few comments about the survey requirement were recorded, although more than 3,000 students completed the surveys. There was little evidence that the mandatory nature of the survey depressed rating on the sophomore survey or on the 1999 graduating senior survey. However, the later responses for spring 2000 graduates were clearly and consistently lower for most of the questions on the survey. The results are somewhat counter-intuitive because sophomores were more "forced" (unable to register without completing the survey) than seniors, and the differences may result from the way students were informed of the requirement. Sophomore requirements were well publicized, but seniors were informed through a letter attached to the application for graduation, and most late responses were the result of sending lists of students who had not completed the survey to the departments. An appendix contains some comments about the surveys. (Contains 10 tables.) (SLD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 452 768

Institutional Research Report

Number 4-00-1

Mandatory Surveys

Do They Negatively Bias Results?

R. Thompson

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

HE033985

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Institutional Research Report

Number 4-00-1

Mandatory Surveys

Do They Negatively Bias Results?

Background

East Carolina University conducts routine surveys of sophomores and graduating seniors. These surveys are sponsored by the University of North Carolina's General Administration (GA) and are conducted on each of the 16 campuses of the UNC system biannually. ECU conducts the Graduating Senior Survey continuously as students apply for graduation and prepares reports for each group of fall and spring semester graduates. It will also conduct the Sophomore Survey each spring semester.

Response Rate Concerns

Every other spring semester (even years) the GA combines ECU results with those from other campuses and prepares reports for the UNC administration and the North Carolina legislature. Because of the importance of these reports, the GA has been concerned that each campus attains an acceptable response rate, defined as 85% or better. Previous ECU surveys of graduating seniors have yielded response rates of approximately 50 percent, which is consistent with the experiences of other UNC campuses. The GA has urged campuses to improve upon that rate and to consider making the surveys administrative requirements of the University. The UNC-GA takes the position that – given the amount of state money that supports the UNC system – the University has the right to require certain administrative procedures, including these institutional evaluation forms.

ECU introduced two changes in survey procedures during the 1999-2000 academic year in order to both improve response rates and decrease costs: (1) on-line survey instruments were introduced whereby the student is directed to a website where he/she can complete the survey and transmit the results directly to an ECU database; and (2) both the Sophomore and the Graduating Senior surveys were conducted as administrative requirements of the University.

Sophomore Survey Procedures

The student records of sophomores eligible to participate in the survey (those with 45-60 completed credit hours, at least 30 of which were from ECU) were tagged such that the student could not pre-register for summer or fall 2000 courses until the survey was submitted. This change in procedure was well publicized in the student newspaper, on the student radio station, and through e-mail messages to the students' ECU e-mail accounts. The procedures were also announced to all ECU faculty and staff via e-mail. In addition, there was a follow-up e-mail message to non-respondents, and finally a postcard to non-respondents.

HE033985

Graduating Senior Survey Procedures

The Graduating Senior Survey is conducted at the time a student applies for graduation. Applicants for graduation are given a letter from the Chancellor that explains the need for the survey and directs the student to a website to complete the survey. It explains that this institutional evaluation form is necessary before their application for graduation will be considered official. (It does **not** say that the student will be unable to graduate if they have not submitted the form.)

Mandatory Survey Concerns

Institutional researchers and others have been concerned that requiring a survey (institutional evaluation form) will have a negative effect on the ratings that the students give the university. [Include documentation if necessary] The argument is that the requirement will anger students, who will express that anger through low ratings. There is also a phenomenon whereby higher response ratings equate to lower ratings because the students with the most positive attitudes generally respond freely. The harder the institution presses to get responses, the more they reach disgruntled students. [This must have been studied before—search for references]

These concerns were certainly expressed by faculty and staff at ECU when the decision to require the evaluation forms was announced. Staff at the Registrar's office who deal directly with the students, and staff at the Office of Planning and Institutional Research who administer the surveys were concerned about the negative feedback that they heard from the students. When survey results were tabulated both surveys yielded ratings that were generally high (above UNC averages), but lower than the ratings from prior periods when the evaluation forms were not required. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research decided to look more closely at the possible negative effects of the mandatory nature of the surveys. Survey responses were tabulated by the dates they were submitted. Presumably, the students who responded late in the process did so because they felt forced. If the requirement yielded lower ratings, it should be obvious by comparing the late responses to all other responses.

Research Results – Sophomore Survey

The responses to the Sophomore Survey were tabulated in four groups:

1. Forms submitted prior to March 5, 2000—the date that follow-up e-mail messages were sent to students asking them to respond. These students were responding to notices posted on bulletin boards, the campus newspaper, or the first e-mail message.
2. Forms submitted March 6-16, 2000. These students were probably responding to the second e-mail message, or to further notices in the campus newspaper.
3. Forms submitted March 17-26, 2000. These students were probably responding to postcards that were mailed March 17th.
4. Forms submitted after early registration began March 27th. These students were unable to register until they submitted the evaluation forms.

Tables 1-4 present the results (as percent of responses with ratings of "Excellent" or "Good") for each of the four time-segment groups, as well as for the total of all forms submitted. Table 1 shows the ratings for Faculty Contributions. Not only is there no clear decline in ratings over time, but for many of the questions the ratings given by those who submitted forms after March 26th were above the average of all forms submitted! There is no evidence of rating deterioration as one moves from the early to the late responses.

Table 2 shows the ratings for academic services ("Help Outside the Classroom"). Again, there is little evidence that those submitting forms late gave lower ratings. In fact, for orientation and advising the latest group of surveys (submitted 3/27 to 4/19) gave some of the highest ratings. That is also the case for career-related services and for timely availability of textbooks. For the remaining categories –academic skill labs, library, and technology services – there is no consistent pattern to the responses by date submitted.

Table 3 shows the ratings for the questions about campus safety, class size, spoken English of instructors, as well as the ratings for non-academic services ("Other Offices that Serve You"). The ratings for campus safety, registration process, and registration staff show a definite decline for those responding after March 26th ("forced"). For the remaining offices and services, however, there is once again no clear pattern. In some cases, once again, those responding late gave the highest ratings.

Table 4 provides the responses for the conclusion questions, and for the ECU-specific questions about personal development and computer usage. The ratings for the conclusion questions show a definite decline for the students who responded after March 26th. These were the lowest ratings for each of the five questions. The ratings for three of the five questions on personal development (maturity) are lowest for the latest responses—possibly indicating a lower level of maturity for these students. The responses to the question about how frequently the student checks their e-mail shows a steadily declining percentage from the earliest to the latest submitted forms. This is consistent with the fact that the early communications with the students were by e-mail.

Research Results – Graduating Senior Survey

The late responses from fall 1999 and spring 2000 graduates were each tabulated and compared with all responses for those graduates. Late responses were defined as those submitted after department chairs were given lists of students who had applied for graduation but who had not yet submitted an evaluation form (December 1st for fall 1999 graduates, and April 18th for spring 2000 graduates). Tables 5-10 compare the late responses to all responses for fall 1999 and spring 2000 graduates. While there is not a clear pattern for fall 1999 graduates, there is a clear and pervasive pattern of lower ratings from the spring 2000 graduates who submitted their forms late (and presumably felt forced to respond).

Table 5 shows the responses for the questions pertaining to faculty contributions. There is no clear pattern for the fall 1999 graduates, but the late responses for spring 2000 are clearly below the respective averages for all responses for all questions. It is interesting that the decline is the same (-4.3 percentage points) whether measured from the 8 detailed questions (questions A-1 to A-8), or from the one overall question (A-9).

Table 6 shows the responses to the questions about academic services ("Help Outside the Classroom"). Once again, there is no clear pattern for fall 1999 graduates, but the late responses for spring 2000 graduates are clearly lower, particularly for the overall questions.

Table 7 shows the responses to the questions about knowledge, skills, and personal growth. Once again, there is no pattern for fall 1999 graduates, and predominately lower ratings for late spring 2000 graduates. It is interesting to note, however, that the late responses from spring 2000 graduates gave higher ratings to "personal growth", to "ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds", and to "recognizing and acting on ethical principles."

Table 8 shows the responses to questions about non-academic services ("Other Offices that Serve You"). Here there is a clear pattern of lower ratings for late responses from both the fall 1999 and the spring 2000 graduates.

Table 9 shows the responses to the conclusion questions. Again, the late responses for spring 2000 graduates are lower.

Table 10 shows the responses to the ECU-specific questions about personal development and computer usage. It is interesting to note that the late spring 2000 respondents may have been somewhat less mature, but the differences are small and not convincing. It is very interesting to note that, in contrast to the sophomore survey, the late respondents to both the fall 1999 and spring 2000 surveys were more computerized and checked their e-mail more frequently than the average respondents to those surveys.

Comments

Respondents to the Sophomore and Graduating Senior surveys were provided an opportunity to register their comments. Many respondents took advantage of this opportunity and provided extensive comment on a variety of topics. We expected that, if students were angered by the survey requirement, they would provide many comments to elaborate on that sentiment. Appendix A lists the comments received about the survey. There were not many such comments, considering that there were over 3,000 respondents to the three surveys.

The references to completing the graduating senior survey multiple times are probably because they had submitted a survey with a missing, illegible, or incomplete SSN so that we could not identify it as theirs. We will correct this in the future by establishing a screening mechanism such that the student must enter a valid SSN in order to access the survey instrument.

Conclusions

There is little evidence that the mandatory nature of the survey depressed ratings on the Sophomore Survey – with the possible exception of ratings for the Registrar's Office, and for some of the conclusion questions. Similarly, there is little evidence that the mandatory nature of the survey affected the ratings from fall 1999 graduating seniors. However, the late responses from spring 2000 graduates were clearly and consistently lower for most of the questions on the survey.

These results are somewhat counter-intuitive because the sophomores were clearly more "forced" than were the graduating seniors. The sophomores could not pre-register for summer of fall 2000 courses until they submitted the survey. The only negative consequence for the graduating seniors, if they fail to submit a survey, was to receive multiple reminders from their departmental office.

The difference might stem from the differing way the students were informed of the requirement. The sophomore survey requirement was well publicized before the student records were "tagged", and e-mail messages were sent to students. Most students are used to rules about sequencing events, i.e., that they cannot take course b until they have completed course a, etc. They may have interpreted this as one more step in the pre-registration process.

In contrast, the graduating seniors were notified of the requirement by the letter from the Chancellor that was attached to the application for graduation, or by their departmental offices. Most of the late responses tabulated on tables 5-10 were the result of sending department offices lists of students who had applied for graduation, but had not yet submitted a survey (that we could identify as theirs). Apparently these lists were translated into threats that the student would not graduate if they did not submit an evaluation form.

Why the difference between fall 1999 and spring 2000 graduating seniors? Most of the fall 1999 graduates applied for graduation before the decision was made to make the institutional evaluation form an administrative requirement. Most of the late responses for fall 1999 resulted from sending departments a single list of applicants for graduation who had not yet submitted an evaluation form. In contrast, the departments were sent such a list each week for the month preceding spring 2000 graduation.

We have learned from these experiences the importance of good publicity to make sure the students are aware of the requirement; and the importance of direct communication with the students via e-mail. For example, it may be more effective in the future to post notices on bulletin boards and in the student newspaper to inform graduating seniors of the requirement. It may also be more effective to send reminder e-mail messages to students who have applied for graduation but have not yet submitted an evaluation form, rather than routing this information through academic departments.

We believe, based on the results described in this paper, that mandatory surveys will not necessarily yield depressed ratings – if the requirement is well publicized and carefully handled.

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Sophomore Survey

Table 1- Faculty Contributions

Number of Respondents:	815	85	118	202	1220
Section A - Faculty Contributions Please evaluate how well faculty members at this campus do each of the following. Please mark only one response for each.	[Percent "Excellent" or "Good"] Surveys Submitted by Date:				
	2/21 - 3/5	3/6 - 3/16	3/17 - 3/26	3/27 - 4/19	Total
1. Set high expectations for you to learn	90.5%	91.7%	93.2%	91.5%	91.0%
2. Respect the diverse talents and ways of learning of you and your classmates	74.2%	77.4%	80.3%	79.1%	75.8%
3. Encourage you to be an actively involved learner	76.3%	79.8%	76.9%	76.6%	76.7%
4. Encourage student-faculty interaction, in and out of the classroom	65.0%	66.3%	70.1%	77.6%	67.7%
5. Give you frequent and prompt feedback	72.7%	78.6%	75.4%	76.6%	74.0%
6. Encourage you to devote sufficient time and energy to your coursework	84.1%	86.9%	91.5%	84.5%	85.1%
7. Develop opportunities for you to learn cooperatively with fellow students	66.1%	73.8%	73.5%	72.0%	68.3%
8. Care about your academic success and welfare	66.8%	67.9%	67.8%	70.0%	67.5%
Summary of questions 1-8 ***Percent of total responses***	74.5%	77.8%	78.6%	78.5%	75.8%
9. In general, how would you evaluate your instructors on these eight measures? ***Percent of total responses***	83.3%	83.1%	85.6%	83.0%	83.5%

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Sophomore Survey

Table 2- Help Outside the Classroom

Section B- Help Outside the Classroom Based on your experience so far, how would you evaluate the following services? *(If you have not had enough experience with a service to evaluate it, please mark "Don't know/did not use.")*	[Percent "Excellent" or "Good"] Surveys Submitted by Date 2/21 - 3/5	3/6 - 3/16	3/17 - 3/26	3/27 - 4/19	Total
1. Orientation for new students					
a. length of session	**55.8%**	**81.8%**	**81.9%**	**83.5%**	80.5%
b. quality of programs	**76.1%**	**78.2%**	**80.8%**	**80.8%**	77.4%
c. helpfulness of staff	**82.9%**	**82.1%**	**87.6%**	**85.4%**	83.7%
d. accommodations	**76.5%**	**82.4%**	**82.3%**	**82.4%**	78.5%
e. ***Overall*** effectiveness of orientation	**82.9%**	**75.6%**	**86.0%**	**87.3%**	83.3%
2. Academic advising					
a. access to adviser	**69.6%**	**63.1%**	**72.4%**	**81.8%**	71.4%
b. sufficient time with adviser	**63.4%**	**59.5%**	**67.0%**	**76.4%**	65.6%
c. accurate information about degree requirements and course sequencing	**63.6%**	**61.9%**	**73.3%**	**76.7%**	66.6%
d. knowledge of campus policies and procedures	**70.3%**	**70.2%**	**70.2%**	**79.3%**	71.7%
e. academic advising services ***overall***	**69.1%**	**71.1%**	**73.9%**	**79.3%**	71.3%
3. Academic skill labs or tutoring if you needed extra help in the following areas.					
a. writing	**87.6%**	**82.9%**	**91.2%**	**87.5%**	87.7%
b. reading	**85.2%**	**83.9%**	**93.0%**	**85.1%**	86.0%
c. mathematics	**79.7%**	**69.4%**	**87.0%**	**85.2%**	80.9%
d. study skills	**82.5%**	**80.0%**	**77.8%**	**86.3%**	82.7%
e. evaluate labs ***overall***	**86.9%**	**84.2%**	**34.5%**	**89.3%**	86.9%
4. Library					
a. hours of operation	**92.4%**	**95.0%**	**89.9%**	**94.6%**	92.7%
b. access to databases and collections	**87.8%**	**91.4%**	**88.3%**	**87.9%**	88.1%
c. training to use library	**56.9%**	**61.8%**	**64.1%**	**65.0%**	59.3%
d. library services ***overall***	**87.6%**	**91.4%**	**92.7%**	**88.8%**	88.6%
5. Technology					
a. access to the internet	**94.8%**	**97.4%**	**92.8%**	**89.1%**	93.9%
b. hours of operation for computer center, labs, and help desks	**86.0%**	**90.8%**	**82.9%**	**85.2%**	85.9%
c. access to up-to-date information	**92.0%**	**94.7%**	**94.5%**	**90.1%**	92.1%
d. access to trained staff for help	**78.9%**	**84.4%**	**80.0%**	**80.8%**	79.7%
e. technology training classes	**78.3%**	**78.8%**	**77.8%**	**81.2%**	78.9%
f. technology services ***overall***	**92.5%**	**94.9%**	**91.6%**	**91.0%**	92.4
6. Career-related services					
a. opportunity for career assistance	**82.2%**	**86.7%**	**77.3%**	**85.1%**	82.6%
b. information on internships, co-ops, etc.	**74.7%**	**73.1%**	**67.5%**	**82.9%**	75.1%
c. resources available to explore	**80.8%**	**76.9%**	**78.3%**	**85.7%**	81.1%
d. information available through career center	**86.5%**	**83.6%**	**84.3%**	**91.0%**	86.8%
e. career-related services ***overall***	**83.1%**	**84.1%**	**79.5%**	**89.9%**	84.0%
7. Timely availability of textbooks, computer supplies, and other course materials provided by the campus bookstore	**71.4%**	**68.7%**	**74.8%**	**76.8%**	72.4%

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Sophomore Survey

Table 3- Safety, Class Size, Other Offices

Section C -Campus Safety, Class Size, and the Spoken English of Instructors	[Percent "Excellent" or "Good"] Surveys Submitted by Date 2/21 - 3/5	3/6 - 3/16	3/17 - 3/26	3/27 - 4/19	Total
a. Do you feel that this campus has taken sufficient steps to ensure your physical safety?	76.0%	80.7%	76.1%	71.5%	75.1%
b. How many of your classes, if any, do you feel have been too large for you to learn effectively?	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	35.7%
c. In how many classes have you had difficulty understanding the spoken english of an instructor?	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	34.1%
Section D - Other Offices that Serve You (If you have not had enough experience with a service to evaluate it, please mark "Don't Know/did not use" then skip to the next service. For those services which require interaction with university staff secretaries, tutors, counselors, office workers, or other people please rate how responsive those staff people were to your needs.					
Evaluation of Service Area					
1. Registration process	51.5%	50.6%	54.8%	49.2%	51.4%
2. Financial aid services	71.9%	64.7%	60.8%	74.4%	70.7%
3. Campus food services	49.1%	51.3%	46.7%	56.8%	50.2%
4. Campus health services	63.4%	62.3%	63.9%	67.7%	64.1%
5. Campus counseling (not career) services	72.7%	62.1%	65.0%	79.1%	72.6%
6. Business services/cashier/student accounts	78.7%	81.7%	75.3%	83.7%	79.5%
7. Campus residence life programs for students living in university-owned housing	70.3%	67.3%	62.3%	74.6%	70.0%
8. Opportunities to participate in campus recreational and other extra-curricular or co-curricular activities	88.9%	80.9%	83.3%	84.5%	87.2%
9. Opportunities to participate in community service projects	74.0%	62.1%	66.3%	73.6%	72.3%
10. Opportunities to develop leadership skills	78.9%	71.2%	70.6%	74.5%	76.8%
Summary of responses	*68.7%*	*65.0%*	*64.3%*	*70.5%*	68.3%
Percent of responses					
Evaluation of Staff Responsiveness					
1. Registration process	57.8%	66.7%	58.8%	56.1%	58.2%
2. Financial aid services	69.5%	78.0%	66.1%	75.3%	70.5%
3. Campus food services	56.9%	59.3%	57.9%	59.6%	57.5%
4. Campus health services	64.9%	62.0%	69.4%	74.2%	66.3%
5. Campus counseling (not career) services	68.7%	63.6%	59.4%	73.3%	68.0%
6. Business services/cashier/student accounts	72.0%	76.7%	71.0%	75.0%	72.6%
7. Campus residence life programs for students living in university-owned housing	72.2%	73.7%	67.9%	69.9%	71.6%
Summary of responses	*64.9%*	*68.1%*	*64.3%*	*67.6%*	65.4%
Percent of responses					

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Sophomore Survey

Table 4- Conclusions and ECU Questions

Section E -- Your Conculsions	[Percent "Excellent" or "Good"] Surveys Submitted by Date: 2/21 - 3/5	3/6 - 3/16	3/17 - 3/26	3/27 - 4/19	Total
1. All things considered, how would you characterize the intellectual environment on this campus?	**50.7%**	**59.3%**	**53.8%**	**41.5%**	50.0%
2. All things considered, how would you evaluate the overall quality of instruction?	**86.5%**	**95.1%**	**84.7%**	**82.9%**	86.3%
3. All things considered, how would you evaluate the overall education that you are receiving at this institution?	**90.7%**	**92.7%**	**90.5%**	**86.4%**	90.1%
4. Do you plan to complete your degree at this institution?	**98.1%**	**98.6%**	**97.9%**	**95.1%**	97.6%
5. If you could start over again, would you still choose to attend this institution?	**68.8%**	**68.7%**	**66.9%**	**62.1%**	67.5%
Section G- Personal Development-Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.					
1. Hard work is more important than good luck for success.	98.1%	92.8%	94.9%	98.0%	97.4%
2. My life is determined by my own actions.	98.4%	96.4%	97.5%	96.0%	97.8%
3. People like me have a good chance to reach our goals	99.1%	96.4%	99.2%	97.0%	98.6%
4. I believe my program of study at ECU is preparing me well for my chosen career.	96.4%	97.6%	98.3%	93.5%	96.2%
5. Overall, my experiences at ECU have increased my self-confidence so I can be successful in life.	94.0%	95.2%	94.9%	93.0%	94.0%
Section H-- ECU Computer Usage					
1. Do you ha ve a computer at your campus residence?	84.4%	77.2%	83.5%	81.4%	83.4%
2. How frequently do you use university computers?					
a. in the classroom	18.6%	14.7%	10.9%	18.4%	14.8%
b. in computing labs	41.9%	42.0%	33.9%	41.7%	41.1%
c. in dormitories	40.6%	27.5%	27.6%	25.8%	36.0%
d. in libraries	23.9%	25.9%	24.8%	30.6%	25.3%
3. How frequently do you use the ECU kiosks?	8.9%	50.0%	10.3%	10.3%	9.0%
4. How frequently do you check your E-mail?	91.6%	78.3%	66.1%	55.1%	82.2%

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Graduating Senior Survey

Table 5 - Faculty Contributions

Percent "Excellent" or "Good"

Section A - Faculty Contributions Please evaluate how well faculty members in your major department do each of the following	Fall 1999 Graduates			Spring 2000 Graduates		
	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
1. Set high expectations for you to learn	96.3%	97.4%	1.1%	94.7%	88.5%	-6.2%
2. Respect the diverse talents and ways of learning of you and your classmates	87.7%	83.9%	-3.8%	85.0%	79.7%	-5.3%
3. Encourage you to be an actively involved learner	91.0%	92.1%	1.1%	88.9%	82.8%	-6.1%
4. Encourage student-faculty interaction, in and out of the classroom	81.8%	82.9%	1.1%	81.1%	75.8%	-5.3%
5. Give you frequent and prompt feedback	85.6%	85.8%	0.2%	84.4%	78.5%	-5.9%
6. Encourage you to devote sufficient time and energy to your coursework	92.2%	91.4%	-0.8%	92.2%	90.8%	-1.4%
7. Develop opportunities for you to learn cooperatively with fellow students	91.4%	88.2%	-3.2%	88.2%	88.1%	-0.1%
8. Care about your academic success and welfare	83.4%	81.6%	-1.8%	82.9%	78.7%	-4.2%
Summary of questions 1-8 ***Percent of total responses***	88.7%	87.9%	-0.8%	87.2%	82.8%	-4.3%
9. In general, how would you evaluate your instructors on these eight measures? ***Percent of total responses***	92.0%	91.8%	-0.2%	90.4%	86.2%	-4.3%

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Graduating Senior Survey

Table 6 - Help Outside the Classroom
Percent "Excellent" or "Good"

Section B- Help Outside the Classroom Based on your last two years on this campus, how would you evaluate each of the following (If you have not had enough experience with a service to evaluate it, please mark "Don't know/did not use."	Fall 1999 Graduates All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	Spring 2000 Graduates All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
1. Academic advising in your major						
a. access to advisor	82.9%	85.4%	2.5%	84.3%	76.7%	-7.6%
b. sufficient time with advisor	79.7%	80.5%	0.8%	79.6%	71.3%	-8.3%
c. accurate information about degree requirements and course sequencing	78.4%	81.1%	2.7%	79.4%	75.4%	-4.0%
d. knowledge of campus policies and procedures	77.1%	78.5%	1.4%	76.8%	74.6%	-4.2%
e. academic advising services overall	82.2%	83.1%	0.9%	82.7%	74.1%	-8.6%
2. **Library services**						
a. hours of operation	90.7%	91.5%	0.8%	88.6%	84.9%	-3.7%
b. staff responsiveness	81.0%	79.6%	-1.4%	80.8%	76.0%	-4.8%
c. access to databases and collections	84.5%	86.2%	1.7%	84.4%	80.9%	-3.5%
d. library services overall	89.8%	92.0%	2.2%	89.8%	83.5%	-6.3%
3. **Technology services**						
a. access to the Internet	94.2%	95.2%	1.0%	93.5%	92.4%	-1.1%
b. hours of operation for computer center, labs, and help desks	79.6%	78.6%	-1.0%	78.1%	76.9%	-1.3%
c. access to up-to-date facilities	91.6%	89.8%	-1.8%	87.0%	85.7%	-1.3%
d. access to trained staff for help	74.9%	71.4%	-3.5%	69.9%	68.1%	-1.7%
e. technology training classes	77.0%	67.2%	-9.8%	71.9%	69.6%	-2.3%
f. technology services overall	91.9%	92.0%	0.1%	88.0%	87.2%	-0.7%
4. **Career-related counseling/information services**						
a. access to counselors in the campus career center	79.5%	84.1%	4.6%	81.8%	74.2%	-7.6%
b. helpfulness of career counselors	71.8%	76.2%	4.4%	74.3%	69.8%	-4.5%
c. evaluation of your personal interests and skills	74.5%	77.9%	3.4%	77.7%	69.9%	-7.8%
d. scope and quality of career information	89.4%	86.0%	-3.4%	85.6%	82.3%	-3.3%
e. career-related counseling/info. services overall	82.5%	81.8%	-0.7%	82.0%	73.3%	-8.7%
5. **Employment search assistance**						
a. resume preparation	80.7%	71.4%	-9.3%	77.7%	77.4%	-0.3%
b. interview preparation and skills	72.0%	71.0%	-1.0%	69.7%	71.3%	1.7%
c. gaining access to job listings (i.e. career fairs, databases, etc.)	75.9%	75.0%	-0.9%	77.7%	72.4%	-5.2%
d. employment search assistance overall	77.6%	78.1%	0.5%	77.6%	75.3%	-2.3%

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Graduating Senior Survey

Table 7 - Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Growth

Percent "Excellent" or "Good"

Section C -Knowledge, Skills, and Personal Growth To what extent do you think your college education contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in each of the following areas?	Fall 1999 Graduates			Spring 2000 Graduates		
	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
a. writing skills	95.3%	93.8%	-1.5%	93.8%	92.3%	-1.5%
b. listening skills	95.4%	94.7%	-0.7%	94.1%	95.4%	1.3%
c. speaking skills	93.8%	94.9%	1.1%	91.0%	89.6%	-1.4%
d. comprehension skills (understanding written info.)	94.4%	96.4%	2.0%	94.2%	93.4%	-0.9%
e. using mathematics skills	77.9%	77.2%	-0.7%	77.5%	71.2%	-6.2%
f. applying scientific methods of inquiry	84.8%	88.4%	3.6%	84.7%	82.0%	-2.7%
g. enhancing analytic skills	92.3%	93.6%	1.3%	93.0%	92.2%	-0.8%
h. developing computer skills	88.5%	91.2%	2.7%	89.0%	88.7%	-0.2%
i. ability to function as part of a team	93.6%	92.4%	-1.2%	90.8%	90.3%	-0.5%
j. ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds	93.4%	91.7%	-1.7%	90.6%	92.2%	1.7%
k. recognizing and acting on ethical principles	90.8%	87.4%	-3.4%	88.0%	89.0%	1.0%
l. appreciating racial equity	87.8%	86.9%	-0.9%	84.7%	83.1%	-1.7%
m. appreciating gender equity	88.2%	88.0%	-0.2%	87.0%	86.2%	-0.8%
n. personal growth	96.7%	95.4%	-1.3%	96.5%	97.7%	1.2%
Summary of responses	90.9%	90.9%	0.0%	89.6%	88.8%	-0.8%

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Graduating Senior Survey

Table 8 - Other Offices that Serve You

Percent "Excellent" or "Good"

Section D - Other Offices that Serve You

Based on your last two years on this campus, how would you evaluate each of the following services? (If you have not had enough experience with a service to evaluate it, please mark "Don't Know/did not use" and then skip to the next service). For those services which require interaction with university offices or units (secretaries, tutors, counselors, office workers, etc.) please rate how responsive the staff in those offices were to your needs.

	Fall 1999 Graduates			Spring 2000 Graduates		
	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
Evaluation of Service Area						
1. Registration process	62.9%	61.2%	-1.7%	64.4%	57.8%	-6.5%
2. Financial aid services	66.4%	56.0%	-10.4%	64.1%	64.1%	0.0%
3. Campus food services	55.1%	55.1%	0.0%	52.9%	40.9%	-12.0%
4. Campus health services	70.0%	65.9%	-4.1%	68.0%	65.7%	-2.3%
5. Campus counseling (not career) services	79.7%	75.2%	-4.5%	76.0%	65.5%	-10.5%
6. Business services/cashier/student accounts	77.9%	79.3%	1.4%	76.2%	74.2%	-2.0%
7. Campus residence life programs for students living in university-owned housing	73.9%	72.4%	-1.5%	74.3%	63.1%	-11.2%
8. Opportunities to participate in campus recreational and other extra-curricular or co-curricular activities	91.8%	87.4%	-4.4%	89.4%	90.9%	1.5%
9. Opportunities to participate in community service projects	76.5%	77.7%	1.2%	76.0%	82.9%	6.8%
10. Opportunities to develop leadership skills	85.0%	77.4%	-7.6%	83.3%	91.9%	8.7%
Summary of responses Percent of responses	72.6%	69.3%	-3.3%	71.3%	68.3%	-3.0%
Evaluation of Staff Responsiveness						
1. Registration process	74.3%	73.4%	-0.9%	72.4%	62.5%	-10.0%
2. Financial aid services	66.2%	65.6%	-0.6%	67.0%	66.7%	-0.4%
3. Campus food services	67.3%	65.7%	-1.6%	60.7%	54.0%	-6.7%
4. Campus health services	73.8%	66.9%	-6.9%	71.0%	67.3%	-3.6%
5. Campus counseling (not career) services	80.1%	67.6%	-12.5%	76.3%	71.7%	-4.6%
6. Business services/cashier/student accounts	77.1%	77.4%	0.3%	73.9%	70.5%	-3.4%
7. Campus residence life programs for students living in university owned housing	77.1%	73.1%	-4.0%	74.5%	66.4%	-8.2%
Summary of responses Percent of responses	72.9%	70.1%	-2.8%	70.1%	64.4%	-5.6%

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Graduating Senior Survey

Table 9 - Conclusions and Plans for Next Year

Number of Respondents: 1208

Section E -- Your Conculsions	Fall 1999 Graduates			Spring 2000 Graduates		
	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
1. All things considered, how would you characterize the intellectual environment on this campus?	58.0%	61.6%	3.6%	58.3%	44.5%	-13.8%
2. All things considered, how would you evaluate the quality of instruction?	Percent "Excellent" or "Good"					
a. In your major?	94.4%	94.5%	0.1%	93.5%	86.9%	-6.6%
b. overall?	85.3%	82.7%	-2.6%	83.9%	81.5%	-2.4%
3. All things considered, how would you evaluate the overall education that you are receiving at this institution?	93.7%	93.3%	-0.4%	92.9%	89.1%	-3.8%
4. If you could start over again, would you still choose to attend this institution?	71.6%	Percent "Yes" or "Not Sure" 72.1%	0.5%	74.0%	71.4%	-2.6%

Effect of Mandatory Surveys

Graduating Senior Survey

Table10 - ECU Questions

Percent "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"

Section G- ECU Questions **Personal Development** Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the statements below. There are no right or wrong answers.	Fall 1999 Graduates All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	Spring 2000 Graduates All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
1. Hard work is more important than good luck for success.	90.3%	87.6%	-2.7%	91.3%	91.5%	0.1%
2. My life is determined by my own actions.	93.9%	93.4%	-0.5%	94.3%	93.8%	-0.5%
3. People like me have a good chance to reach our goals.	91.6%	93.6%	2.0%	93.2%	94.2%	0.9%
4. I believe my program of study at ECU is preparing me well for my chosen career.	80.8%	85.6%	4.8%	81.3%	74.8%	-6.5%
5. Overall, my experiences at ECU have increased my self-confidence so I can be successful in life.	82.8%	88.3%	5.5%	84.0%	82.8%	-1.2%

Computer Usage	Fall 1999 Graduates All Responses	Late Responses	Difference	Spring 2000 Graduates All Responses	Late Responses	Difference
	Percent "Yes"					
1. Do you have a computer at your campus residence?	69.9%	77.2%	7.3%	76.2%	81.4%	5.2%
	Percent "Daily" or "Weekly"					
2. How frequently do you use university computers?						
a. In the classroom.	22.5%	22.6%	0.1%	21.4%	26.8%	5.4%
b. In computing labs.	54.8%	59.3%	4.5%	59.2%	60.4%	1.2%
c. In dormitories.	9.5%	6.1%	-3.4%	11.0%	6.3%	-4.7%
d. In libraries.	29.6%	28.1%	-1.5%	27.0%	29.3%	2.3%
3. How frequently do you use the ECU kiosks?	4.7%	3.1%	-1.6%	5.2%	4.0%	-1.2%
4. How frequently do you check your E-mail?	71.8%	76.1%	4.3%	80.1%	82.0%	2.0%

Appendix A

Comments about surveys provided by respondents to the sophomore and graduating senior surveys

Sophomore Survey

It is hard to fill out this survey because it is very general. Most professors here are excellent but there are always one or two who are not. It is hard to give an accurate rating when each professor is so different. Also, this survey should ask something about costs. This would include dining services, books, and other campus related costs such as library copying. I know that many students have strong opinions on that too. If we are evaluating the school, that should definitely be included in the survey.

Thank you for wasting my time with this.

I filled it out only because I needed to get registered for summer class. This is an entirely unethical way of treating me and other students. I pay my own tuition and don't appreciate being pushed around by policies such as this. Thanks for wasting my time.

I think that it is ridiculous that I have to complete this survey just to register especially when I tried to access it online and the server could not find it. So I had to waste time coming down to the registrar's office and do it here.

I think this survey should have been on a volunteer basis only!

*I personally emailed Chancellor Eakin himself about a month ago, but I did not get any response. I must wonder why this survey is going to do any good for me as a student here.

Senior Survey for Fall 1999 Graduates

My biggest problem with ECU administrative offices (Financial Aid/Registrar/Cashier/etc.) was that we are constantly told conflicting information. This "mandatory" evaluation form is a good example, in that we were told it was voluntary and now you are saying you will hold our degree if we don't do this. This is absurd being that I have completed the requirements for my degree and this form is not one of them. So, since this is mandatory, I will be honest and tell it like it was.

As for my department, I gave fair or poor answers on several answers because: 1) We were rarely given feedback on exams. We took exams and received a curved score, never having the opportunity to review what we missed or to discuss the exam with faculty.

2) Those of us who complained or spoke up to make suggestions for improvements, we were labeled as "whiners" by staff. Faculty and office staff talked negatively about other students' complaints in ears range of other students.
3) The [Named] Dept. classes were very disorganized and rarely followed the course outline. Those [Dept] classes taught by medical school staff were excellent in content and organization.

I think surveys such as these may be helpful but I don't think that the "threat" made to those of us who did not originally fill it out is necessary. I think we all know that our application still would have gone through even if we did not fill this out. The only reason I have chosen to fill this out is because it is the path of least resistance!

I did not find out about the need to fill out these surveys or forms in order to graduate until I came across them by chance. I was expecting to graduate this semester, having completed a senior summary and been accepted into Graduate School.

I was notified about this form the day of graduation! I was then told I would not receive a diploma until it was filled out. Communication seems to be a major problem.

Senior Survey for Spring 2000 Graduates

Since I came to this University, the tuition continues to go up but the quality of education hasn't changed. If anything I have become less confident in ECU's ability to educate at all. Making this survey mandatory is flat ridiculous. This is how it works….I pay tuition, I pass the required classes, then you (ECU) gives me my degree. If you have any more hoops for me to jump through I would appreciate it if you let me know. Charging us to print is just another way to screw the students out of more money. Can I ask what all the fees are for? Then we go to the bookstore to purchase REQUIRED text and we get screwed again. More money for ECU less for the student…I guess that is ECU's overall goal and don't try to use the excuse that ECU don't have enough money, look at the library. What is the deal with the water wall? It is environmentally irresponsible, and the chime, and the TV's…..all wasted money so I don't want to hear ECU don't have enough money. This is only a small part of the list of things that is wrong with ECU. If anyone wishes to contact me I guess you know how! Now that I have jumped through another hoop please leave me alone and give me the diploma that I paid for!

I am uncomfortable answering this survey. I did not realize you can force someone to participate in a survey. And to force them to identify themselves, is that legal? Can you legally force a student to answer these questions? It doesn't seem right. I will find out how this is legal.

Survey shouldn't be required for graduation.

This is the second time I have completed this survey. What happened to the first one? Is it a requirement to complete the survey twice to graduate?

This the SECOND survey that I had to fill out. I filled out one when I applied for graduation and find it very time consuming that I am having to fill out another one!!!

Appropriate to my four years here is the fact that this is the second time I had to fill out this form because "somehow" it was "lost" when I first applied for graduation. This probably explains why my responses reflect poorly on ECU. Also, as an Honor's student, I have been severely disappointed with the program and the way it is run. Although the University lost my GMAT scores, and the Honor's program director was responsible for me not getting enrolled in a major class, I have been impressed with most of the professors in chemistry, and the athletic department when I played tennis. However, as an academic scholar, I feel inadequately challenged. Thanks to my friends and extracurricular activities, I am a well-rounded person.

I would like to state that I am offended that you would ask me to attach my social security number to this survey and still expect honest answers. I hope that my lies in response to your poorly thought out survey questions totally screw up your results…Not that you won't just skew the results to your liking just like every other survey results I've ever seen from this university. The only honest answer I gave was on the professor who most influenced me, and you know what? I bet he'd refuse this survey too.

I would like to give my deepest gratitude to Lynn Roeder (Director of Counseling), John Shearin (Thea. Dept.), Ken White (Thea. Dept.), Susanna Gastano-Schultz (Spanish Dept.), Dr. Holte (Eng. Dept.), and all the staff and faculty that I have been able to work with while attending ECU. I find it next to impossible to narrow down my ONE most significant positive influence and I find the question extremely UNFAIR!!!! "Based upon the last two years" is a huge amount of time and never could there be just one most important anything.

As for section H?????
I truly find those sort of questions ridiculous, the answers personal, and a waste of our time.

I would like to also like to ask you if there is some fix the "bugs" in this survey situation. I have now completed this survey (3) times. Please, if you do not mind would you let me know that you have received it and I may Graduate on Friday 5/12-13/2000.
Thank you.